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ABSTRACT

Adjustment is one aspect of the elementary principal's relationship to work, as he or she both responds to the work environment and contributes to its construction. This study furthers research examining adjustment from the individual, organizational, and individual/job match perspectives by investigating adjustment patterns for 113 satisfied and dissatisfied elementary principals surrounding Chicago, as well as career/adjustment and employee position/adjustment differences. A preliminary analysis has identified two variables involving adjustment responses related to the principal's dual role as office subordinate and school superordinate: career mobility (specifically, variety of movement as an objective indicator) and work satisfaction or dissatisfaction. Additionally, a correlation can be drawn between background and adjustment differences; 28 percent of "movers" remained in their first principalship, for instance. "Movers" and "stayers" also differ in terms of their teaching experiences as well as in their adjustment to the dual role. Satisfied stayers tend to adjust to that role without battle, while movers adjust by viewing themselves as protectors of school interests. Balancing autonomy and control is another role factor, with dissatisfied principals perceiving that they have insufficient autonomy over teachers. A final role factor involves social group support. (KS)

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ALTERNATIVE PATTERNS OF ADJUSTMENT: THE CASE OF THE ELEMENTARY PRINCIPALSHIP

BY

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INTRODUCTION

Occupations differ in how they constrain the adjustment[1] to work. For example, in some occupations, adjustment is restricted by the needs for public safety and uniformity (air traffic controllers). In other occupations, personal and intrinsic constraints affect adjustment (artists). Since most work is carried out in an organizational setting, adjustment is also affected by the individual's position within the organization. The automobile assembly line worker's adjustment is different from that of the chief executive officer and the foreman differs from both since they each are constrained by the specific circumstances inherent in their positions. These constraints and contingencies act as objective features of the occupation which affect the adjustment of all individuals.

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[1]The term 'adjustment' is used in this study to label a specific aspect of the individual's relationship to work. There are difficulties in using this term: the term commonly is used in a normative way, as in "well-adjusted" and sometimes in a passive sense to denote the individual's toleration of the work environment's demands. In this study, the term will be used in an active and non-normative sense to refer not only to the individual's response to what the environment presents but also to the individual's contribution to constructing that environment (Weick,1969).

In addition to the objective contingencies which affect all persons within a particular institutional sphere, there are the individual's perceptions of these contingencies which provide a subjective element to adjustment. Work experiences and the assessment of these experiences affect how individuals perceive the objective contingencies and the ways to respond to these contingencies.

The aim of the study reported in this paper is to identify and describe the alternative patterns of adjustment to work circumstances of a group of individuals holding the same organizational position. Studies which examine individuals' accommodations to work have been pursued for some time by a variety of researchers. At least three perspectives have been used in these attempts to understand adjustment to work: individual, organizational, and an individual/job match perspective.

Studies using an individual perspective identify the factors and processes involved in the formation of needs, expectations, and interests which affect the relationship to work. The research emphasizes either the content of the relationship to work, i.e. those needs or expectations which influence satisfaction (Maslow, 1943; Herzberg, et al, 1959) or the process by which these factors come to be associated with satisfaction or dissatisfaction, e.g. comparing effort and reward (Pritchard, Dunnette, and Jorgenson, 1972; Lawler and O'Gara, 1967; Miskel, et al, 1975). Both content and

process studies treat adjustment primarily in terms of how the needs of individuals are met. While these studies have been valuable in identifying the needs and processes of meeting those needs which are associated with the relationship to work, they have tended to ignore how these needs vary as the individual passes through the career. There is evidence to suggest that the effort-reward discrepancy, rather than remaining static, changes depending on the career stage of the individual (Berlew and Hall, 1966; Katz and Van Maanen, 1977).

The second perspective uses the organization as the source of influence on adjustment and emphasizes situational factors which affect the adjustment to work. A great deal of research has been conducted to identify those situational factors largely ignored by the individual perspective studies. This research has examined the effect on adjustment of task characteristics, e.g. skill variety or task autonomy (Hackman and Lawler, 1971; Locke, Sirota, and Wolfson, 1976); job characteristics, e.g. pay and supervision (Smith, et al, 1969); rewards (Broedling, 1977; Guzzo, 1979; Brief and Aldag, 1977); and role characteristics (Katz and Kahn, 1966; Lyons, 1971; Rizzo, et al, 1970). A second group of studies has examined the relationship of the individual to the organization, especially in terms of the individual's commitment (defined as willingness to remain with the organization). The approaches of Becker's "side bet" or

exchange theory (1960) and the psychological approach which treats commitment as an attitude of loyalty toward the organization (Sheldon, 1971; Kanter, 1968) have received the majority of attention. Another approach to commitment suggested by Stevens, et al (1978) involves an integrated model which includes personal, role-related, and organizational features which contribute to an individual's commitment to the organization. In light of the emphasis on situational factors, it is interesting that little attention in these studies has been given to how hierarchical position affects adjustment. While these studies deal with situational factors which may relate to position, e.g. pay and supervision, they do not use position as a relevant variable. There is also a tendency in the literature on commitment to treat adjustment solely in terms of willingness to remain with the organization and meet the organization's expectations. This ignores those individuals who may be both committed (stay with the organization) and productive (meet the organization's expectations) but do not find this adjustment satisfying.

A third perspective moves beyond the emphasis on either individual needs or organizational influences to treat adjustment as a suitable fit between an individual and a job (Argyris, 1957). Many of the studies using this perspective are concerned with practical attempts to find this suitable fit, e.g. job redesign programs (Schein, 1978; Katz, 1978;

Katz and Van Maanen, 1977). Research using this perspective has been valuable in moving beyond the previous two approaches to examine the temporal factors of adjustment, e.g. how adjustment changes with the career (Hall and Mansfield, 1975; Hall and Nougaim, 1968). However, there is a tendency in this literature to assume that adjustment is equivalent to the congruence of job and individual and to ignore how individuals who are dissatisfied adjust to their work circumstances. Since not all individuals who find their work adjustment dissatisfying are able or motivated to change jobs, it would be interesting to find out how these individuals manage to adjust to their work and remain in the organization.

The three perspectives identified above treat work adjustment in different ways: meeting individual needs, responding to organizational influences, and matching the individual with the right job. Studies using these perspectives have been valuable in identifying individual, organizational, and temporal factors which affect how individuals adjust to the contingencies of their work.

In reviewing these approaches, three areas for further conceptual and empirical study have been identified which form the basis for the current study. First, there is the need to understand the alternative patterns of adjustment of both those who are satisfied with their work and those who are dissatisfied. Herzberg's work (1959) has been helpful

in pointing out that differencs between satisfied and dissatisfied individuals are not confined to the presence of certain conditions for the satisfied and the absence of those conditions for the dissatisfied. Satisfaction and dissatisfaction are two different responses to work and we should expect different perceptions of how to respond to the specific contingencies facing the individual at work.

Second, research on adjustment to work should examine differences in career which may be related to alternative patterns of adjustment. Several theorists have pointed out that careers not only have an objective quality (the sequence of jobs) but also a subjective quality which provides the means for individuals to interpret their work lives (Hughes, 1958; Van Maanen, 1977; Schmuck, et al, 1981). This aspect of the career provides a "moving perspective" which permits individuals to evaluate responses to current work contingencies in terms of their past successes or failures. We would expect then that different career patterns should relate to different adjustment patterns as the individuals evaluate the possible responses to work contingencies.

Third, there is a need to investigate how organizational position relates to adjustment to work. Katz and Van Maanen's study (1977) suggests promising leads toward finding the adjustment patterns of different types of employees. They found that not only do individuals vary in the aspect of work that is satisfying at each career stage but also

that this in turn varies for different types of employees (administrators, professionals). However, in addition to comparing individual adjustment at different hierarchical levels, it would be valuable to identify the alternative adjustment patterns of individuals at the same hierarchical level, e.g. middle or front line management.

These three areas for further research will be emphasized in the current study. By using the case of the elementary principalship, we should be able to investigate some of the patterns of adjustment of individuals at a particular organizational level. By examining both satisfied and dissatisfied principals, it should be possible to investigate adjustment patterns without equating adjustment and satisfaction. Furthermore, by examining differences in the career mobility of these principals we should be able to determine if there are alternative patterns of adjustment for principals with different career experiences.

Methodology

Data Collection

The data used in this study come from a larger investigation of the elementary principalship conducted under the direction of Professor Dan C. Lortie at The University of Chicago and supported by the National Institute of Education (Lortie, et al, 1983). Therefore, the population, sample, and instrument described below pertain to the larger study

as well as the current study.[2]

The population includes principals in elementary school districts of three counties surrounding Chicago. From this population, a random, stratified (by district size) sample of 120 principals in 60 school districts (two principals per district) was drawn. Of the original 120, one principal was deceased and six refused to be interviewed, leaving 113 principals in 59 districts (a 94% response rate). The only known similarity among the six who refused was a slight tendency of these to have doctorates).

The interviews, which were conducted in the Winter of 1980-81, lasted two to four hours, and were held in the respondent's school. The instrument used in the interviews consisted of both pre-coded and open-ended questions which were formulated after extensive bibliographic research and a series of pilot interviews with superintendents and principals. In addition to the interview, each respondent completed a self-administered, factual questionnaire giving biographical and career information. Both instruments were pre-tested prior to use with the sample.

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[2]The current study is supported by a grant from the Spencer Foundation to The University of Chicago.

Identification of Variables

The study reported here is in its initial phase and should be considered a preliminary analysis of the adjustment patterns of elementary principals. Thus, the variables identified here are also preliminary choices to be refined and tested by further conceptual and empirical study.

Two variables are used to differentiate groups of elementary principals: career mobility and the principal's satisfaction or dissatisfaction with work. While career mobility involves several different factors, such as rate, direction, and sequence, this study deals with only one factor: variety of movement. Other studies have found variety of movement to be useful in differentiating individuals especially in terms of their relationship to work (Hall and Schneider, 1972; Carlson, 1972; Watson, 1974). The variable is measured with information which answers the following question: Has the principal's career since and including the last teaching position been located in the same district (current) or has the career consisted of moves among two or more districts. (All questions used as indicators in this study may be found in Appendix A).

The variety of movement variable results in a dichotomy similar in some ways to Gouldner's use of Merton's local/cosmopolitan distinction (Gouldner, 1957, 1958). Gouldner uses the distinction to describe subjective role orientations which include such features as tendency to remain in

the organization versus tendency to move. While our variety of movement measure is similar to Gouldner's, its use in this study is as an objective indicator of career mobility; no subjective orientation is being applied to this independent variable.

The second variable, assessment of work, is measured by using responses to a question which asks if the individual would repeat the career choice. Individuals who responded that they certainly or probably would repeat the principalship decision were coded as satisfied while individuals who responded, "probably not or certainly not," were coded as dissatisfied. The question of repeat career choice is useful for measuring assessment in this study for several reasons. First, the question reflects a career perspective (principals were asked if they would repeat the career choice) which is important for this study. Instead of examining one's assessment of the current job, this study examines assessment in terms of the experience thus far as a principal and the willingness to repeat the choice. Second, the question is an evaluative measure seeking the principal's own assessment rather than the organization's assessment of his/her adjustment. This avoids a managerial bias which assumes that if the individual is "adjusted," he must be satisfied with the adjustment. Finally, this indicator has been useful in previous studies of the individual's assessment of this relationship to work (Blauner, 1964; Gross and Napior, 1967; Lortie, 1975).

Using these two variables, career mobility and assessment, groups of principals can be identified in order to differentiate patterns of adjustment. Various features of these groups, their similarities and differences in early career, will be described to provide a profile of each group.

The dependent variables for this study involve various adjustment responses to the specific work contingencies of the elementary principalship. While several work contingencies could be used, e.g. relationship with the community, this study focuses on that contingency involving the principal's dual role as central office subordinate and school superordinate. This role is central to the principal's position in the hierarchy and involves important authority issues with which the principal must contend.

The importance of the dual role for the principal's adjustment to work can be seen if we contrast the work contingencies of teaching and those of the principalship As a teacher, an individual focuses primarily on a classroom and its relation to the school. In this context, s/he is in a subordinate position within the adult hierarchy of the school. When an individual moves to the principalship, a different hierarchical position is accepted involving a superordinate relationship to teachers and a subordinate relationship to central office. This change in hierarchical position necessitates adjustment to a dual role.

The questions used to measure adjustment to this dual role involve situations in which the principal must deal with the conflicting demands, allegiances, and loyalties of central office and school groups. These situations include handling conflict and trouble, obtaining social support, and responding to autonomy/control issues. The aim of this investigation is to identify alternative patterns of adjustment based on the principal's perception of how to respond to these work contingencies. No attempt will be made to examine how the principal actually behaves.

The first part of this study identifies the groups of principals defined by mobility and satisfaction and provides background information on the groups. This information includes data on their social backgrounds and early careers which show similarities and differences among the groups. The second part of the study identifies the alternative patterns of responses to the dual role contingencies.

Results

Identification of Groups

Principals were grouped on the basis of career mobility (variety of movement) and assessment of adjustment as a principal. Theoretically, four groups were possible: (1) stayers (those who have remained in the current district throughout their careers as principals) who are satisfied with their adjustment as a principal; (2) stayers who are dissatisfied with their adjustment: (3) movers (those who

have moved among two or more districts) who are satisfied with their adjustment; (4) movers who are dissatisfied with their adjustment. However, only three categories contained enough principals to warrant being considered a group for our purposes; out of the total sample of 113 principals, only two were dissatisfied movers. (We will return to this findings in the Discussion section.) In contrast to the satisfied movers (N=51) and the satisfied stayers (N=43), the dissatisfied stayers group (N=13) is small enough to warrant caution in making inferences about this group;

Background characteristics

When we examine demographic characteristics and some career features of the three groups, we find a great deal of similarity. No important differences among the three groups in age, sex, marital status, nor experience as a principal were found.

However, some background differences were found which are important for understanding the variation among principals' adjustment. The lack of mobility which is inherent in the way the two groups of stayers were defined is reinforced, at least for the dissatisfied group, when we look at social background. The dissatisfied stayers were more likely than the other groups to have grown up in the same type community--suburban--in which they now work, thus experiencing little or no change in the type of community from

their childhood on. Seventy-five percent of this group came from suburban or urban settings rather than rural compared with 60% of the satisfied stayers and 53% of the movers. This lack of mobility is also reinforced by the location of their undergraduate education. While all three groups were more likely to get their undergraduate degrees at universities inside Illinois rather than outside, this was 30% more likely for the dissatisfied than for the other group of stayers (28% more likely than the movers).

The lack of mobility which we have seen in the early backgrounds of the stayers, especially the dissatisfied ones, continues into their careers in education. As would be expected by the way the groups were formed, tenure in the current district for stayers is more than that for movers; in fact, it is twice as much for the stayers (dissatisfied stayers, X=19 yrs; satisfied stayers, X=18 yrs.; movers, X=9 yrs.). However, not only have the stayers remained in the same district, they have also remained in the same principalship. Fifty-four percent of the dissatisfied and 56% of the satisfied stayers are in their first position; but only 28% of the movers are in their first principalship.

Another feature of the career which may affect how individuals adjust to the work is whether they were hired by the current superintendent. Holdovers from a previous superintendent may perceive their position in the organization as more of an outsider than principals who were hired

by the current superintendent. This perception of organizational position may affect their willingness to adjust to the work conditions in a way that might involve conflict with central office. We found that the dissatisfied group is more likely than either of the other two to be holdovers. Forty-two percent of the dissatisfied say they were hired by the current superintendent, compared with 56% of the satisfied stayers and 62% of the movers. If being hired by the current superintendent provides a kind of insider status, the movers are more likely to possess this status than either of the other groups and the dissatisfied are least likely to hold such a status.

One final set of background characteristics is important for our study of adjustment to work, especially to contingencies involving relationships with teachers. The type of experience which principals had as teachers, either at the elementary or secondary level, may affect their identification with the elementary teachers whom they supervise. When we examine the teaching careers of the three groups, we find that the dissatisfied were 28% less likely to have had their teaching experience at the elementary level exclusively. Only 15% of the group had experience solely at this level compared with 43% of the satisfied stayers and 42% of the movers. While more dissatisfied principals had experience at mixed elementary and secondary teaching levels, the elementary experience apparently did not last long; the dis-

satisfied had only 2.3 years. (mean) of elementary teaching experience compared with 5.7 years. (mean) for the other group of stayers and 3.1 years (mean) for the movers. The difference between the two stayers groups is significant at the .005 level.

We find then that while the three groups are similar in terms of some demographic characteristics, they differ in other ways which will be important in our interpretation of the patterns of adjustment. Stayers are less mobile than the movers not only during the principalship (which is inherent in the way the groups were formed) but also at earlier stages of their careers. The groups also differ in terms of their elementary teaching experience and the likelihood of being holdovers. These findings should be helpful in interpreting their adjustment to a dual role involving relationships to both teachers and central office.

Perception of Adjustment to Dual Role

The findings presented in this section provide evidence of how principals differ in their adjustment to the dual role in terms of responses to three types of situations: handling conflict and trouble, responding to their own and other's needs for autonomy, and getting social support.

Handling conflict and trouble

The amount of conflict and trouble a principal faces may vary in different situations, but it is highly unusual for a principal to have no conflict or trouble in doing the work. Handling these uncomfortable situations may put principals in the position of dealing with the conflicting interests of their superiors and their subordinates.

Principals were asked about instances in which they and their schools wanted one thing and the central office (CO) wanted another. The question had two parts: What area of work did this conflict involve? How are conflicts of this type usually resolved? We were surprised to find a large number of responses claiming that this type of conflict does not occur. Stayers were much more likely than movers to respond in this way (69% of the dissatisfied stayers and 41% of the satisfied stayers compared with 18% of the movers). Because of their long tenure with the organization, the stayers may perceive that their views and the CO's views of what the school needs are congruent. While we have no data to support this explanation, we do have evidence of one perspective which differentiates the two stayer groups. Dissatisfied stayers claim this type of conflict does not occur because it is their job to carry out CO policy (31% compared with 5% of the other stayer group). Unlike the two satisfied groups, the dissatisfied identify themselves as agents of CO and emphasize this aspect of their role over that of the protector of the school's interests.

Because so few dissatisfied principals claim that such a conflict exists, it is difficult to make much of their responses to how this type of confict is resolved. However, some tendencies for the dissatisfied group and a clearer view of the resolution for the other two groups can be identified. If the dissatisfied claim the existence of conflict with CO, they never admit to the school winning these conflicts; instead, they claim CO wins. Thus, the dissatisfied adjust to conflict by emphasizing their role as CO agents; if they do take the school's side they never claim to be able to carry off a win. While the other two groups (satisfied stayers and movers) admit that CO usually wins, they are much more likely than the dissatisfied to claim that the school sometimes wins (26% of stayers and 24% of movers). Because of their willingness to enter into battle with CO, the movers are more likely to adjust to the dual role by viewing themselves as protectors of the school's interests. The satisfied stayers are more likely to be able to adjust to their dual roles without battle, but if they do, they, like the movers, are sometimes able to win for the school.

When principals were asked about sources of trouble and the ultimate threats which trouble presented, their responses reveal more evidence of the tendency for stayers to identify with CO and for movers to identify with the school. Stayers were less likely to perceive CO as a source of trouble in their work as principals (8% for both groups compared

to 27% of the movers). When asked about the ultimate threat they faced, stayers, especially the dissatisfied, were more likely to mention some result which would affect CO, e.g. legal action or angry parents who involve CO (80% of the dissatisfied, 50% of the satisfied stayers, compared to 31% of the movers). In contrast, movers were more likely to be concerned with threats involving their relationship with school groups, e.g. angry parents--with no mention of CO involvement, loss of credibility with staff or parents.

These findings regarding how principals handle conflict and trouble suggest that stayers and movers adjust to these situations differently by emphasizing their roles with different groups. Stayers are more likely to emphasize their CO roles in terms of conflict and trouble; they are less likely to claim conflict and are more concerned with how CO may get involved. We should qualify this by saying that the satisfied stayers, while concerned with CO interests, do not perceive their roles exclusively as CO agents as the dissatisfied do, but rather seem to perceive little conflict between what they and the school want and what CO wants. However, the movers are much more concerned with the school, protecting its interests and avoiding trouble which may threaten the principal's relationship to school constituencies.

Responding to autonomy/control issues

A second area of the dual role to which the principal must adjust involves balancing autonomy and control. This balance involves the principal's autonomy to run the school versus CO's need to control the school as one unit of the district and the teacher's autonomy in the classroom versus the principal's need to control the classroom as one unit of the school. Balancing these autonomy and control issues does not involve a simple equation since the principal does not have exclusive control over either CO wishes or teachers' actions. Furthermore, teachers' actions have implications for CO's control of the principal. If teachers complain to CO or irritate parents who then complain, CO may be reluctant to grant the autonomy the principal wants or needs to run the school.

Principals were asked about the kind of autonomy they ideally should have and in what area they actually needed more autonomy. In both cases, dissatisfied principals mentioned autonomy over teachers. They were 38% more likely than the other groups to say that principals should have autonomy over teachers in the areas of evaluation and hiring/firing (69% compared to 35% for satisfied stayers and 31% for movers). Furthermore, 42% of the dissatisfied group admit they need more autonomy over teachers, compared to 25% of the satisfied stayers and 20% of the movers. Thus dis-

satisfied principals do not perceive that CO gives them sufficient autonomy in the important area of dealing with their teachers. In contrast, the other groups feel relatively comfortable with their autonomy in this area and are more concerned with autonomy over instructional areas such as curriculum.

Not only do dissatisfied principals perceive that they have insufficient autonomy over teachers, they are less likely to support teacher autonomy. These principals perceive that teacher autonomy affects their own ability to do their jobs. For example, the dissatisfied are 38% more likely to feel that teacher tenure and contract arrangements hurt their instructional influence (62% compared to 24% of the satisfied stayers and 28% of the movers). It is thus not surprising to find that they also are much less likely to support greater teacher autonomy in school decision making (54% compared to 86% for satisfied stayers and 76% of movers).

These dissatisfied principals perceive that when teachers have autonomy (at least in the areas identified) the principal has less autonomy. Thus one way to adjust to the autonomy/control dilemma is to reduce the autonomy of teachers. This distrust of teacher autonomy could result from the perception of a weak position in the organization for which we have evidence both in their holdover status (being hired by a previous superintendent) and their perception of

insufficient autonomy over teachers. They may feel that their weakness in CO must be offset by strength in the school. Since, as we have found, they identify with CO, their wish for more control over teachers may have more to do with avoiding CO embarrassment and disapproval than any school related concerns.

The satisfied principals, in contrast, are not dissatisfied with the autonomy they have over teachers and are not opposed to greater teacher autonomy. They perceive themselves as being in a strong position with CO which allows them to influence instruction and control the school without resorting to diminishing the teacher's autonomy.

Obtaining social support

We have examined how principals differ in their responses to conflict and autonomy dilemmas of the dual role of the principalship. But adjustment to this work also involves seeking and obtaining support from various groups for action. Where different types of principals find their support should provide some indication of where their loyalties and dependencies occur. These loyalties and dependencies will affect their evaluation of alternative courses of action (Simon, 1945) and their relationship with other individuals within the organization from whom they do not seek support (Blau and Scott, 1962).

Responses to three different questions concerning social support reveal that satisfied stayers and movers are more likely to look to school groups for their social support than are the dissatisfied. When principals were asked with which group they most valued their reputation, all three categories of principals mentioned students and teachers; however, the dissatisfied principals were least likely to mention these school groups (69% compared to 86% of the satisfied stayers and 84% of the movers). They were much more likely to mention their reputation with either CO or other principals in the district. Furthermore, the dissatisfied are less likely to view interaction with school groups as a rewarding part of their jobs. When asked to describe a good day, the dissatisfied were 21% less likely to mention involvement with teachers or students (11% compared to 32% for satisfied stayers and 28% of the movers). This reluctance to see school groups, especially teachers, as a source of support is reinforced by the fact that the dissatisfied are less likely to describe their teachers in positive ways (38% compared to 70% of the satisfied stayers and 67% of the movers).

These findings regarding their current source of support seem to be consistent with their perception of their sources of support early in their careers. The dissatisfied were more likely to turn to CO or other principals rather than school groups, e.g. teachers, for help when they first

became principals (77% compared to 60% of the satisfied stayers and 54% of the movers). For the satisfied stayers and movers, adjustment to the dual role of the principalship involves seeking support from the subordinates with whom they work. In contrast, the dissatisfied seek support from their superiors in CO.

These findings suggest that the movers are more likely to emphasize their loyality to school groups which explains their willingness to enter into conflicts to protect the interests of these groups. Satisfied stayers, while loyal to CO, seek much of their support from the school groups with which they work each day; this balances their dependencies and loyalties between CO and school. The third category, the dissatisfied principals, seeks the support of CO with which they identify and upon whom they feel dependent.

Discussion

The findings reported above provide evidence of three different patterns of adjustment to the dual role of the principalship. In this section, we will discuss these patterns using information from the early career to help explain the findings.

The first pattern is found among those principals referred to as "dissatisfied stayers": principals who have remained in the same district throughout their careers and who are dissatisfied with their adjustment to the principal-

ship. These individuals adjust to their work by emphasizing their role as a CO agent, enforcing CO policy and protecting CO from embarrassment and trouble.

The background of these dissatisfied principals is helpful in understanding why this group adjusts by emphasizing their CO subordinate role. First, features of their long association with one district make these principals more dependent than the others on CO. By remaining in the same district for their entire principalship career, these dissatisfied principals are less likely to have developed outside career resources which could have improved their bargaining position with CO (March and Simon, 1958). Thus, they are more dependent on CO for meeting their career progress needs. Their long tenure in the district has increased their investments in the district and made it more difficult to consider outside job opportunities which necessitate giving up these investments (Becker, 1960; Stevens et al, 1978). Furthermore, the fact that they are holdovers from a previous superintendent could produce uncertainty regarding their future in the organization, thereby intensifying their dependency. These features of their experience in the district encourage a sense of dependency which forces these principals to adjust to their role by emphasizing their subordinate status.

The second feature of their backgrounds involves the small amount of elementary teaching experience which most of

the principals in this group had. This makes them less likely to see teachers as resources and provides less opportunity to form relationships with elementary teachers before becoming principals. They are less likely to perceive teachers as a source of support and more likely to see them as a source of problems for CO.

The second pattern is found among those principals whom we have called "satisfied stayers." These principals have also remained in the same district throughout their careers but are satisfied with their adjustment as principals. The adjustment pattern for this group involves a balance between their commitment to CO and their school leadership role. They claim that no conflict between what the school and CO want occurs.

Their background experiences with the district and with elementary teaching provide possible explanations for how they find it feasible to balance the two elements of their dual role. Their long tenure in the district provides the opportunity for greater awareness of what kinds of adjustment are possible in this district; this produces a greater congruence between these principals' and CO's sentiments than would be possible for someone from the outside. Furthermore, having been hired by the current superintendent, they are more likely to have views compatible with the CO.

Their extensive experience in elementary teaching provides the opportunity for an awareness of how teachers can

be a resource for the principal. This experience also provides the opportunity to form relationships with teachers which is helpful to the principal in getting support for CO policies.

While both dissatisfied and satisfied stayers have had long tenures with the current organization, the satisfied have an insider status with the superintendent and a strong identification with teachers. They have discovered that these two features contribute both to their ability to handle their school role and their ability to keep CO happy by securing the support of teachers.

The third pattern includes the group we have called "movers," who are satisfied with their adjustment as principals and have moved among several districts. This group's adjustment to the dual role is marked by an emphasis on protecting the school's interests. They admit to engaging in school/CO conflicts and seem to be able to win those conflicts at least as often as the satisfied stayers. Their willingness to fight CO in order to protect the school's interest signals a sense of independence from CO which is in sharp contrast to the dissatisfied stayers.

This independence results from at least two background factors: having been hired by the current superintendent and the effect of mobility. Being hired by the current superintendent grants an insider status to these principals which should result in a sense of security concerning their

future with the organization. This security permits a greater degree of independence than would be the case for holdovers who are unsure of their standing with CO. Furthermore, the fact of their movement among several districts has reduced the number of investments in one district which might have made them dependent on the current administration (Becker, 1960). Their mobility has also increased the propensity to use movement as a kind of adjustment if work becomes dissatisfying.[3]

Because these movers also look to school groups, especially teachers, for support, they are more willing to protect the interests of the school in order to maintain this support.. Furthermore, their concern for teachers should produce fewer staff morale problems which would bring CO approval and help maintain their independence.

Conclusion

Earlier in this paper, we identified three gaps in the research on adjustment to work contingencies to which this paper sought to respond: different adjustment patterns of individuals within the same hierarchical position, differences among those with different career patterns, differ-

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[3]This latter point brings us to the unanswerable (with the current data) question of why essentially no principals in this sample were dissatisfied movers. One possible explanation is that propensity to use movement as a response to dissatisfying work is more likely for those who have experienced movement since the risk will be less (Hall and Schneider, 1972).

ences among the satisfied and dissatisfied. We have examined how individuals at the same hierarchical position in an educational organization, principals, vary in the alternative ways they respond to the unique contingencies of the work. We have also found that individuals with different career mobility experiences adjust to the work contingencies in different ways. Moreover, we have found that adjustment to work is very different for satisfied and dissatisfied principals.

These findings should contribute not only to future hypotheses testing but the current knowledge of the alternative ways principals respond to their work and thus provide a knowledge base for both theory and practice. Furthermore, these findings should contribute to future research as well as the current knowledge of adjustment to other positions at the same hierarchical level.

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